
Blighted Property Review Committee
Thursday, August 15, 2013
Certification Hearing
Meeting Report

Mr. Olsen called the Certification Hearing to order at approximately 6:08 pm. He announced that a quorum was present.

Mr. Olsen announced that the purpose of the hearing was to consider if the conditions of the properties on the agenda met any of the 12 conditions set by the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law of 1945, as amended and the City of Reading Blighted Property Review Committee Ordinance, and could be certified or determined as blighted.

BPRC Attendance: L. Olsen, H. Urena, W. Bealer, M. Wolfe

Staff Attendance: L. Kelleher, T. Butler, Esq., M. Reinhart, K. Yeager

Mr. Olsen asked Ms. Butler, attorney from the City's Law Department, to conduct the hearing. He stated that properties with owners present will be taken first and the remaining properties will be handled in a consent agenda fashion.

Ms. Butler explained the hearing procedures and summarized the blighted conditions as set forth in the City's Blighted Property ordinance. All property owners present were provided with a copy of the property packets that will be entered into the record. She reiterated that properties with owners present would be taken first and the properties without representation would be taken in a consent agenda format.

Certification Hearing

1. 700 N 10th St, Mercedes Rodriguez, PO Box 12866, Reading 19612, purchased March 2004

Ms. Butler asked the property owner to step forward. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Ms. Rodriguez and her translator Medina Otero.

Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail on June 24,

2013

- Notice posted on the property N/A
- Delinquent water charges \$3854.22; Water off July 2007
- Delinquent Taxes 2010-2012 City, County and School and 2008-09 School and County
- Electric: off
- Gas: meter removed 2004
- Trades: Post fire damage framing repairs in progress
- Codes: Inspection scheduled 10/28/13, 2 unpaid work orders, unpaid housing permit 2011-12, windows replaced, total owed \$365.13
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling no response
- Liens N/A

Through her translator, Ms. Rodriguez stated that she has replaced the windows, cleared the delinquent water charges and that she plans to call RAWA to have the water service restored on Monday. She stated that she has been in contact with Property Maintenance and she has started on a plan to repay the delinquent taxes. She stated that she hopes to rent the property out in the fall. She stated that she made property improvements since the determination hearing in June and that she is prepared for the next inspection.

Mr. Bealer asked when the electric service would be restored. Ms. Rodriguez stated that the electric service will be restored when the property is rented.

Public Comment

Ms. Butler opened the floor for public comment. No one stepped forward.

Ms. Butler suggested tabling or releasing the property.

BPRC Vote

Ms. Wolfe moved, seconded by Mr. Urena, to table this property for a minimum of 60 days. The motion was approved unanimously.

2. 311 Hollenbach St, Marie Chevannes, owners, 813 Spring St, 19601, purchased February 2006

Ms. Butler called the property owner to the podium. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Ms. Chevannes and Marvin Chevannes, her son.

Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail on June 24, 2013
- Notice posted on the property on June 26, 2013
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$2920.73; Water off Aug 2007
- Delinquent Taxes \$2008.12 2011 County & School; \$423.86 2010 and 2012 City
- Electric: on
- Gas: meter removed 2002
- Trades: missing front steps, porch roof temporarily supported
- Codes: inspection scheduled 9/13/13, citation for deteriorated exterior, no front steps, rail, 11 unpaid QoL, 4 unpaid work orders, unpaid housing permit, total owed \$2009.07
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling no response
- Liens N/A

Ms. Chevannes stated that she has repaired the interior of the property and she has hired a contractor to repair the steps; however, the contractor was delayed due to a death in his family.

Ms. Butler suggested tabling this property to provide time for the repair of the steps.

Mr. Bealer inquired if a building permit was obtained for the work on the steps. Ms. Chevannes replied affirmatively.

Mr. Olsen stated that even if the steps were repaired the property remains tax delinquent and without water and electric service. He stated that repair to the stairs is insufficient to clear the blight criteria.

Ms. Chevannes stated that she intends to sell the house so the delinquencies become the new owner's responsibility.

Ms. Wolfe inquired about the timing of the sale. Ms. Chevannes stated that she has found a buyer who will purchase the property when the property is rehabbed. She stated that she expects to sell the property in 30 days.

Mr. Olsen inquired about the name of the contractor. Ms. Chevannes stated that the contractor is Ronnie Johnson.

Public Comment

Ms. Butler opened the floor for public comment. No one stepped forward.

BPRC Vote

Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Mr. Corcoran, to approve the certification of 311 Hollenbach Street as a blighted property. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. 516 N 9th St, Jose Munoz, owner, 507 N 14th St, Reading 19604, purchased March 2006

Ms. Butler Called Mr. Munoz to the podium. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Munoz and his wife Maria.

Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail on June 24, 2013
- Notice posted on the property on June 27, 2013
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$1942.07; Water off Oct 2009
- Delinquent Taxes \$7061.25 2008-12 City, County and School
- Electric: off
- Gas: meter removed 2004
- Trades: No exterior structural issues
- Codes: housing inspection report attached, next inspection 8/26/13, 4 No Show inspections, 4 unpaid QoL weeds, registered vacant for rehab since 2011
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling no response
- Liens N/A

Mr. Munoz stated that he purchased the property before the economy went bad. He stated that the mortgage is held privately and the monthly payment is approximately \$2000. He stated that he plans to ask the mortgage holder if he can miss some mortgage payments so he can pay off the delinquencies. He described his problems repairing this property due to the constant break-ins. He stated that the copper pipes have been stolen and that he is constantly replacing broken windows.

Ms. Wolfe inquired about the No Show inspections. Mrs. Munoz stated that there was miscommunication about the inspection schedule but she did attend the last inspection.

Mr. Olsen stated that the taxes are unpaid for five (5) years and the property lacks water and electric service.

In response to a question from Mr. Bealer, Mr. Munoz stated that he is in a “rent to own” deal.

Public Comment

Ms. Butler opened the floor for public comment. No one stepped forward,

BPRC Vote

Ms. Wolfe moved, seconded by Mr. Bealer, to approve the certification of 516 North 9th Street as a blighted property. The motion was approved unanimously.

Certification Consent Agenda

Ms. Butler stated that the following properties are unrepresented at tonight’s hearing:

- 119 Windsor St, Robert Bryant Jr, owner, 340 E Poplar St, York, 17402, purchased April 2006
- 221 Greenwich St, Berks Restoration & Rehabilitation LLC, owner, 221 Greenwich St, purchased April 2013
- 1057 N 9th St, William Reinhart, owner, 1136 Dunkelberger Rd., Leesport PA 19533, no purchase date listed
- 754 N 9th St, Jose Luna Espinal, owner 806 Summit Chase Dr., West Reading 19611, purchased August 2008
- 604 N 9th St, Livin Rodriguez, owner, 631 Elm St, Reading 19601, purchased June 2011
- 245 Pear St, Ventura and Tracy Norman, owners, 2253 Corte San Simeon, Chula Vista CA 91914, purchased December 2006
- 1536 Perkioman Ave, Bruce and Lisa Hill, owners, 101 Dautrich Rd, Reading 19606, purchased August 2000
- 1222 Chestnut St, Vital Batista, owners, 317 Cedar St., Reading 19601, purchased March 2013
- 1031 Windsor St, Marie Jose Buerrier, owners, 772 W. Btadley St, West Hempstead NY 11552, purchased August 2006
- 1035 Muhlenberg St, Ann Burgos, owner, 1035 Muhlenberg St, Reading, 19602, purchased September 2003
- 316 Mulberry St, L & R Homes LLC, owners, 1047 Brighton Beach Ave Suite 2, Brooklyn NY 11235 purchased November 2006
- 40 S 10th St, Arthur Horwedel, owners, PO Box 13421 Reading 19612, purchased December 2006

Ms. Butler stated that these properties meet at least one of the blight criteria. In summary:

- All notices were mailed on June 24, 2013 and posted, when required, on June 27, 2013
- **119 Windsor St**– Delinquent Water \$1184.97, Water off Dec 2012, Gas off since April 2013, Codes: 7 unpaid QoL trash and weeds, 1 unpaid work order, No Show inspection 8/1/13, next inspection 10/8/13, – total owed \$1300
- **221 Greenwich St** - Delinquent Water \$19,444.35; Water off Feb 2008, \$2206.78 2011 City, County and School taxes, \$876.87 2011 City, Electric off, Gas Meter Removed 2007, Codes - Citation damaged roof, windows, graffiti, missing drainage, peeling paint, unsafe door, total owed \$320, Trades - unchanged
- **1057 N 9th St** – Water off Oct 2009, \$13,996.41 total Delinquent County, City and School taxes, Codes - 3 No Show inspections, 8 unpaid QoL weeds and animal waste, 3 unpaid work orders trash, weeds, secure property, placarded April 2013 for 3 No Show inspection, total owed \$2447.07
- **754 N 9th St** - Water off March 2010, Sold at 6-19-13 free and clear tax sale, Electric off, Gas meter removed 2009, Brick façade falling onto Douglass St side of property, Citation, exterior condition 2013, 31 unpaid QoL and 7 unpaid work orders, 2 No Show inspections, unpaid housing permit, next inspection 8-22-13 total due \$6672.13
- **604 N 9th St** - Delinquent Water \$3092.84, water off prior to 1999, \$6402.84 delinquent 2008-12 City, County and School taxes, Trades – major brick failure, Codes – inspection scheduled 8-15-13, previous No Show inspections, unpaid housing permits Citation damaged sidewalk and exterior conditions, 8 unpaid QoL trash and weeds – total owed \$1030
- **245 Pear St**- Delinquent Water \$1951.30, water off May 2010, \$2200.03 delinquent 2011-12 City, County and School taxes, Gas inactive since 2007, Trades – front porch roof collapsing, Codes- 12 unpaid QoL, 4 unpaid work orders, unpaid housing permits, citation for porch, No Show inspection, total owed \$2740.57
- **1536 Perkioman Ave** - Delinquent water \$1297.68, Water off July 2011, \$3785.26 Delinquent City, County and School taxes, Electric off, Gas inactive 2011, Trades – front porch roof collapsing; Codes – 12 unpaid QoL trash and weeds, 3 unpaid work orders trash, secure property, unpaid housing permit, inspection scheduled 8-28-13 total owed, \$3519.69
- **1222 Chestnut St** - Delinquent Water \$266.45, water off Aug 2002, Sold at 6-19-13 free and clear tax sale, Electric off, Gas meter removed 2002, Trades – condemned structure, garage in rear emergency demo, Codes – inspection scheduled 10-2-13, 2 previous No Show old owner and 1 No Show new owner, Citation sidewalk, weeds, deteriorated front steps, peeling paint, 9 unpaid QoL

trash and weeds (old owner), total owed \$225

- **1031 Windsor St** - Delinquent Water \$6745.13, water off Oct 2012, \$3853.29 delinquent 2011-12 City, School and County taxes, Electric off, Codes – 3 No Show inspections, citation deteriorated and damaged wall, sidewalk, front steps, drainage, illegal rental unit, 16 unpaid QoL, 1 unpaid work order, total owed \$5526.88
- **1035 Muhlenberg St** - Delinquent Water \$1305.08, water off June 2011, Sold free and clear tax sale 6-19-13, Electric off, Gas inactive 2011, Trades – fire damage, Codes – citation for exterior condition and trash April 2013, 8 unpaid QoL trash and weeds, 8 unpaid work orders trash, weeds, illegal rental unit – total owed \$3481.57
- **316 Mulberry St** - Delinquent Water \$2977.34, water off March 2012, \$744.16 2012 City and County taxes, Electric off, Gas inactive 2012, Codes – Citation for 3 No Show, total of 4 No Show inspections, unpaid housing permits and inspection fee– total owed \$1955
- **40 S 10th St** - Water off Oct 2009, Sold at 6-19-13 free and clear tax sale, Electric off, gas meter removed Sept 2012, Trades – 2nd flr rear bricks separating from structure, Codes – 3 No Shows, citation broken glass, 7 unpaid QoL trash and weeds, 1 unpaid work order, 3 No Show placards, and illegal rental placard, total owed \$1890.63

Ms. Butler again asked for the property owners and no one responded.

Public Comment

Ms. Butler opened the floor for public comment. No one stepped forward.

BPRC Vote

Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Ms. Wolfe, to approve the certification of the Consent Agenda properties as blighted properties. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Olsen announced that this will be the last hearing Ms. Reinhart attends as she plans to further her education full time. The BPRC Committee thanked her for her assistance and wished her well.

Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Bealer, to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk